

Environmental Restoration Project



Area of Concern (AOC) No. 276: Former Building 829X Silver Recovery Sump (TA-I)

ADS: 1295

Operable Unit: Septic Tanks and Drainfields

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Site History

Building 829X was constructed in 1948 and was used either for office space or by the Graphic Arts Services organization throughout its lifetime. The building was demolished in 1994. Historical SNL/NM Facilities Engineering drawings indicate that a silver recovery system was housed in a below-ground sump located on the west side of the building. The site was inspected on September 14, 1999 and the sump was determined to still be intact. It consisted of a 6-foot diameter metal culvert covered with a metal lid, and the interior of the culvert was filled with 2-inch aggregate starting at approximately 5 feet below grade. The sump and aggregate were removed a short time later (see Current Status of Work, below).

Constituents of Concern

Silver

Current Hazards

There are no surface hazards at the site. Potential subsurface environmental hazards include soil contaminated with silver and perhaps other constituents, to be determined when additional subsurface soil sampling is completed at the site.

Current Status of Work

Samples were collected of material from the bottom of the sump in February 1995 and were found to contain elevated silver concentrations. The Assessment Report for the Building 829X Silver Recovery Sump was submitted to New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) personnel in June 1995. They responded to the report in July 1996 and indicated that the

sampling that had been conducted was inadequate, and that additional subsurface soil sampling was required.

On September 20, 1999, the 6-foot diameter metal culvert and the aggregate from the bottom of the sump was excavated and removed. The excavation was then filled in with clean soil.

The NMED Hazardous Waste Bureau issued a request for supplemental information (RSI) in December 2000. SNL/NM replied to this request and indicated that the additional work described below would be completed at the site. To determine if environmental contamination is present beneath this system and in accordance with agreements reached with NMED personnel, additional sampling was conducted at this site. As shown on the site map, passive soil vapor samplers were installed at four locations around the former sump in April 2002 to detect the presence or absence of VOCs at the site. A single soil sample boring was also be drilled directly beneath the former location of the unit in September 2002. Soil samples collected from this boring were analyzed for volatile organic compounds (VOCs), semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs), polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), total cyanide, high explosive (HE) compounds, metals, and radionuclides.

Future Work Planned

This site may be selected for deeper environmental characterization sampling if analytical results from the shallow sampling indicate potentially significant contamination at depth.

Waste Volume Estimated/Generated

The September 1999 silver recovery sump excavation project generated one 55-gallon drum of potential silver-contaminated scrap metal, plastic, and personal protective equipment (PPE) waste. In addition, approximately 1 cubic yard of aggregate, and 2 cubic yards of soil located directly beneath the aggregate layer was also removed.

Information for ER Site 276 was last updated Jan 17, 2003.